

Sermon Notes

“This I Call to Mind”: Remembering Why We Have Hope

Lamentations 3:21-24
Matt Green, 4/30/2017

Setting: The worst of times (Lamentations)

Remembering the reason for our hope (3:21)

- We must actively remember why we have hope
- Our hope is solid

Our hope: God’s faithful love (3:22-23)

- His loyal love
- His compassionate love
- God’s love is shown in actions
- God is always faithful

Our response: Trust in God as our portion (3:24)

- Our true King
- Our source of all that is needed for life

Do you think of God as your portion?

- Do you constantly remind yourself about—and grow in understanding of—Who God is?
- When life does not go the way you want, do you look around in despair, or to God in hope?
- Are you constantly worrying about needs in life?
- Do you think of God as your provider?

What is your response to this? Discuss it with someone today.

Suggested reading: Matthew 6:24-24; Philippians 3:3-14;
Philippians 4:4-13

Application questions for 4/30/2017 sermon

Lamentations 3:21-24

Calling God's Love to Mind ... Even in the Worst of Times

(Based on Lamentations 3:21)

The writer of Lamentations, writing in “the worst of times” in His nation’s history, finds his hope restored as He “calls to mind” the Lord’s great love for His people. How often do you “call to mind”—not just think about, but absorb into your deepest understanding of life—who God is and what He has done?

How often do you talk with others about God’s work in their lives? How often do you talk about God’s work in your life? How have you been encouraged by thinking back on God’s work?

What hinders you from “calling to mind” who God is and what He has done? What steps can you take to overcome those obstacles?

(Based on Lamentations 3:22)

The writer of Lamentations says God loves His people with a “steadfast love.” This means God’s love is loyal: He has obligated Himself to love His people, because He cares for them so much. The Hebrew word for “steadfast love” is actually in the plural here, so it indicates specific acts demonstrating that loyal love. How has God shown His “steadfast love” in your life? Think of specific examples. How does this encourage you?

Verse 22 also affirms that the Lord’s “mercies” never fail. God’s mercy refers to His tender compassion for His people, like a mother shows for her children. In the plural, “mercies” indicate specific acts showing that compassion. How has God shown His “mercies” in your life? Think of specific examples. How does this encourage you?

Why is it important to understand God’s love both as loyal (“steadfast love”) and as compassionate (“mercies”)?

(Based on Lamentations 3:23)

What is the first thing that goes through your mind when your alarm goes off in the morning? How long does it take to turn your attention to God? What difference would it make to start your day by reminding yourself that God's acts of love and compassion are "new every morning", and to turn to Him from the beginning of each day? If this isn't natural, what steps can you take to place your trust in God from the very start of each day?

Suggested prayer for the start of the day — "The Prayer of Recollection": "God, whatever I do today, I want to do this in you. I don't want to do this alone, in my own power or as a way to hide and cover [my sin and inadequacy]. I don't want to find my identity in anything but Christ. I am in Christ and that is my true identity."

When the writer of Lamentations remembered how God had shown His love for His people, he turned to God directly and said, "Great is your faithfulness." Do you praise God for His faithfulness as He "shows up" in your life? If not, what difference do you think it would make if you did?

(Based on Lamentations 3:24)

What are you waiting for in life? (For example, Reconciliation with a family member? To have "just a little more" income? Improvement to your health?)

What are you lacking in life, that you think you should have? (For example, A new/second car? A bigger house? A perfect family? Respect from co-workers? A promotion?)

Is your "hope" in the things you are waiting for or longing for, or is your hope in God?

What does it mean for you to think of God as your "portion"—the One Who is the source of your life, sustenance, and every good thing? How does this truth affect your thinking? How does it affect your actions?

Do you have a question for the group? It might be something you don't understand that others could help with, or something you think should be covered that hasn't.